

In the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in this application:

- 1-4. (cancelled) An adjustable coupler lock, comprising:
5. (currently amended) An adjustable coupler lock assembly for securing a coupler to a hitch ball, said lock assembly comprising:
 - a coupler having a latch rotatable from an open position to a closed position;
 - a hitch ball;
 - a lock body having an opening therethrough;
 - a locking mechanism disposed within said lock body; and
 - a shaft for securing the lock body to said coupler;wherein said shaft is movable in either [[one]] of two insertion directions relative to said lock body but not in an opposing withdrawal direction when the coupler locking mechanism [[lock]] is in a locked position, with said coupler latch in a closed position and said coupler in contact with said hitch ball.
6. (previously presented) The adjustable coupler lock assembly of claim 5, wherein said shaft comprises two or more recesses.
7. (previously presented) The adjustable coupler lock assembly of claim 6, wherein the shaft recesses have a vertical edge and a tapered edge.
8. (previously presented) The adjustable coupler lock assembly of claim 5, further comprising a cam engagable by said locking mechanism and engagable by a locking plate.
9. (previously presented) The adjustable coupler lock assembly of claim 8, wherein said cam includes a groove which engages said locking mechanism and a projection which engages said locking plate.

10. (previously presented) The adjustable coupler lock assembly of claim 9, wherein said locking plate includes a notch which is engaged by said projection on said cam.

11. (previously presented) The adjustable coupler lock assembly of claim 6, further comprising a locking plate, wherein said locking plate includes an opening through which said shaft is inserted.

12. (previously presented) The adjustable coupler lock assembly of claim 11, wherein said opening in said locking plate includes a peripheral edge which engages one of said two or more recesses when said coupler lock is in a locked position.

13. (withdrawn) A method of locking a coupler latch comprising the steps of:
placing a coupler in contact with a hitch ball;
closing a coupler latch into a locked position;
inserting a shaft, which includes two or more recesses thereon, in one of two opposing insertion directions through an opening in said latch;
sliding a lock body over said shaft, wherein said lock body includes a locking mechanism and a locking plate;
inserting said shaft in one of two opposing insertion directions into said lock body;
spring biasing said locking plate in a direction such that the locking plate engages said shaft when said lock body is slid over said shaft; and
sliding said lock body towards said latch;
wherein said locking plate engages said recesses in said shaft and allows continued advancement of said lock body toward said latch without unlocking said locking mechanism, but does not allow for the lock body to move in a direction opposite of the insertion direction.

14. (withdrawn) The method of claim 13, wherein said shaft is inserted through an opening in said locking plate and said locking plate includes a peripheral edge that engages one of said two or more recesses.

15. (previously presented) The adjustable coupler lock assembly of claim 6, further comprising a seal located around a portion of the lock body that seals against the shaft.

16. (previously presented) The adjustable coupler lock assembly of claim 6, further comprising a protective coating that is applied on a portion of said shaft.

17. (cancelled)

18. (previously presented) An adjustable length lock assembly for securing a coupler to a hitch ball, said lock assembly comprising:

a coupler having a coupler latch rotatable from an open position to a closed position;

a hitch ball;

a lock body defining an opening therethrough and comprising a locking mechanism and a locking plate; and

a shaft having a narrow end, a flange end, and at least two recesses disposed between said narrow end and said flange end;

wherein said shaft is insertable sequentially through said coupler latch and through said lock body opening from either of two opposing insertion directions with respect to said lock body, with said coupler latch in a closed position and said coupler in contact with said hitch ball,

wherein engagement of the locking plate with one of the shaft recesses does not allow movement of the shaft through said lock body in an opposing withdrawal direction relative to the insertion direction unless the locking mechanism is unlocked.

19. (previously presented) The adjustable length lock assembly of claim 18, wherein said shaft and said lock body are made of stainless steel.

20. (previously presented) The adjustable length lock assembly of claim 18, wherein said at least two recesses have a vertical edge nearer the narrow end of the shaft and a tapered edge nearer the flange end of the shaft.

21. (previously presented) The adjustable length lock assembly of claim 18, wherein said shaft is movable through the lock body in the insertion direction without unlocking the locking mechanism.